

One of the Wheeling Register's  
severe articles on the Capital  
Question.

The following editorial appeared in  
yesterday's issue of the Register:

The citizens of West Virginia are soon  
to vote upon the question whether they  
will build a half million dollar State  
House at Clarksburg or accept one free,  
which is already built at Charleston.

It is well for them to remember in this  
connection that the State Treasury is in  
debt at this time one hundred and twenty-  
five thousand dollars for current ex-  
penses.

Attempt to evade it as we may the peo-  
ple of West Virginia will very soon be  
forced to look for in the face, and pro-  
vide for the payment of their "equitable  
proportion" of the old State debt of Vir-  
ginia, whether that "equitable proportion"  
be five million or fifteen million dollars.

With our manufacturing interests pro-  
trated, trade stagnant and unprofitable,  
labor largely unemployed and poorly re-  
warded when employed, with the subjects  
of taxation shrinking and our public obli-  
gations swelling in even greater propor-  
tion, it is good time for the voter to  
stop and reflect.

The State is now well accommodated  
by the city of Wheeling with a State  
house free of expense. This accommoda-  
tion might have continued for fifty years  
had it not been for the action of the rep-  
resentatives from Clarksburg in the Leg-  
islature. Without their connivance, Char-  
leston could have accomplished nothing.  
Their action, if they succeeded in their  
designs, will result in a heavy addi-  
tion to the burdens of the already over-  
burdened tax-payers of the State.

It is a good time to stop and reflect.

The above is a specimen of the intima-  
tion which the Register is seeking to  
practice upon the voters of this region  
in order to induce them to follow its  
course on the Capital question. If the  
statement that the State Treasury is in  
debt at this time \$125,000 is good for  
anything at all as an argument, it is  
against the competency of the men who  
make unwise appropriations out of the  
Treasury and of those who are charged  
with the collection and management of  
the State finances. Because the Legisla-  
ture has appropriated more money than it  
should have appropriated may be a good  
argument for sending a better class of  
men to the next Legislature, but it is  
certainly no argument for locating the  
Capital at a place where the State ex-  
penses will be increased. It has been  
shown by figures that the Register cannot  
ignore that the mileage of the Legisla-  
ture will be decidedly increased by locat-  
ing the Capital at Charleston. The coun-  
ties nearer to Clarksburg than to Char-  
leston send 443 delegates to the Legisla-  
ture while those nearer to Charleston  
send to Clarksburg send only 203. This  
disparity of mileage will run in perpetu-  
ity against the State treasury. Every  
session held at Charleston will cost  
just that much more money than the  
same sessions held at Clarksburg. So  
that so far from the Register's state-  
ment, as to a present deficit of \$125,000  
in the State treasury, being an argument  
for Charleston it is one against it. The  
voters of the State will not forget that it  
is Mr. Ferguson, of Charleston, more  
than any one man in the Legislature, last  
winter, who is responsible for paying com-  
mittee clerks, pages, &c., the maximum  
sums which were awarded to them. Econ-  
omy is not one of the planks in the creed  
of the Third district. If it was, they  
would not be so eager to draw mil-  
lions round by Washington City.

The point made by the Register in re-  
gard to the State debt is very thin in-  
deed—about as thin as the rookery at  
Charleston. The Register is buying up West  
Virginia "deferred certificates" at 5 cents on  
the dollar, with a view to making mil-  
lions out of them. This feat he is to ac-  
complish by getting the Capital located at  
Clarksburg. Unfortunately for the peo-  
ple of West Virginia know that Charleston is  
the very place of all others in the State,  
where a corrupt job can be successfully  
put through. The Register's picture of the  
town when it was the Capital of the State  
is enough of itself to condemn it, saying  
nothing of the notorious and historic  
speculations and jobberies that were com-  
mitted there on the public funds. There  
is to-day vastly more probability that  
the State of Virginia will repudiate her  
debt than West Virginia will ever be  
called on to pay either five or fifteen  
millions of it.

The "Editorial Correspondence" in  
yesterday's Register makes special men-  
tion of the fact that Mr. John E. Massey,  
of Albemarle county, Virginia, has come  
out in favor of repudiation. The writer  
says that the arguments of Massey in fa-  
vor of repudiation are, having their effect,  
and that unless the tide in that direction  
is checked "the day is not distant when  
Virginia will repudiate the debt con-  
tracted prior to the war." After making  
this announcement the "Editorial Corre-  
spondence" goes on to express the op-  
inion that West Virginia is not in any  
event, whether the old State pays or re-  
pudiates, bound for any part of the debt.  
We do not endorse this view of the debt,  
but it is the one that the large majority  
of West Virginia voters will be inclined to  
take, and therefore we say there is vastly  
more probability that Virginia will re-  
pudiate the whole debt, of which the  
West Virginia deferred certificates are a  
part, than that the latter will ever pay  
what the bondholders would consider an  
"equitable proportion" of the debt of the  
old State prior to its division. There is,  
therefore, nothing whatever in such state-  
ments as that with which the Register seeks  
to coerce voters in this part of West Vir-  
ginia into voting for Charleston. Of all  
places in the State wherest to put through  
a big scheme of bribery and corruption,  
give us Charleston. As the Register said  
it in 1874, when arguing in favor of  
removing the Capital from there, so we  
reiterate in 1877, viz, that it is a place  
where "the people are unable to exert upon  
the legislative body that influence which their  
interests demand," and where "the legislators  
are unable to maintain that intercourse with  
their constituents which is necessary for the  
enactment of wholesome laws."

The concluding paragraph in the Reg-  
ister's article will not escape a derisive  
smile from those who are familiar with  
the facts of the passage of the removal  
bill last winter. It suits the editor to  
hold out the idea that it was the rep-  
resentatives of Clarksburg who passed the  
bill. Was ever humbuggery more boldly

paraded before the public than this bald  
and shallow pretense. Those who are  
posted (it is not, however, for such people  
that the Register writes) know that the  
delegates from Charleston came up to the  
last legislature with "capital removal" in-  
scribed on their banners, and that their  
coming, with a view of effecting said re-  
moval by some process or other, was  
heralded for weeks before hand by the  
Courier, (Walker's paper) in the most  
exultant and revengeful tones. All who  
are conversant with the facts know that  
Ferguson was put forward at Charleston as  
his mighty Hercules was by his won-  
derful strength to uproot and bear away  
the Capital from Wheeling, and all such  
persons know that the two bills that were  
offered in the Legislature, one of which  
passed, were his bills. He and "Windy"  
Wilson were the men behind the screen  
who were known to be the wire pullers  
in the whole business. But, as we said,  
it suits the Register to represent that it  
was the lamb and not the wolf that mud-  
died the stream wherest Wheeling was  
drinking. In other words, that it was  
Clarksburg, the accessory, and not Char-  
leston, the principal, that is responsible  
for the passage of the removal bill. This  
is a new sort of ethics. It is a maxim  
of law that the accessory can never be  
punished where the principal is suffered to  
escape. The Register, however, would  
reverse this maxim, and would greatly ex-  
alt the horn of Charleston, the "real  
devil in the case," while making an ex-  
ample of Clarksburg, the seduced victim.  
This is the programme of the Register.  
And to this end it is studiously seeking,  
not to convince the public, but, if possi-  
ble, to work on its fears. It is important  
not to forget that the representatives of  
Clarksburg stood by Wheeling at Char-  
leston. Judge Camden was always our  
friend. At that time our appeal was to  
him, and to others, to remove the Capital  
to Wheeling temporarily, and after that to  
make a permanent location. This was  
done, and therefore we have no right, af-  
ter what they did for us, to say against  
the Clarksburg representatives for voting  
for a bill in which their own town was  
prominently named, especially after the  
Wheeling Register proved that if Char-  
leston persisted in passing the bill Char-  
lottesville would carry off the prize on  
election day. Clarksburg has pledged  
herself before the people of the State that  
if she shall be chosen the future Capital  
of the State, she will stand by Wheel-  
ing in good faith, and see that the seat of  
government remains here until 1885. This  
is all we have a right to ask at her hands.

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